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ABSTRACT

Foreign student trainees in English as a second language (ESL) teacher training programs in the United States have special concerns regarding their teacher preparation programs. These concerns include feelings of anxiety and competition with their native English speaking peers, being expected to have cultural understanding not only of the United States but of other cultures as well, required courses that bear no relevance to their needs, reconciling new and old methodology, and lack of appropriate practice teaching opportunities. Development of training programs for this population should be based as much as possible on careful consideration of their educational backgrounds and possible future work. Involving the trainees in their own program planning can be highly motivating. A proposed plan for program adaptation for non-native ESOL teachers (non-NETs) addresses each of these areas and includes gradual but adequate exposure to practice teaching beginning with students of the same native language background, systematic classroom observation, the option of teaching in practice classes as well as with an experienced teacher, team teaching with a native speaker trainee, and self-evaluation using videotapes. The plan involves coordination between the ESL and teacher preparation programs and requires faculty cooperation, but the result is accommodation of non-NETs' needs and more interaction and wider perspectives for native participants. (MSE)

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TOWARD A BETTER PREPARATION OF THE NON-NATIVE ESOL TEACHER

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In the majority of the teacher preparation programs (TPP's) in the United States, the non-native ESOL trainees (Non-NETs) are generally subject to the same requirements and assignments as the native English speakers except for the language proficiency which is often indicated by a specific TOEFL score. Although the two groups share some goals, they cannot be expected to have the same background or needs. In a typical TPP in the States, the Non-NETs may form a small minority but this should be no reason for ignoring their needs either in the course work or practice teaching.

The aim of this paper is twofold: first, to identify some of the special needs and problems of the Non-NETs, especially in the two areas of methodology and practice teaching; and, second, to present a plan to deal with those needs and problems in light of our experience in an institution that coordinates ESL and both its TESL Certificate and M.A. in TESOL programs. Non-NETs, as used here, may include U.S. residents but, more often, the term refers to foreign participants seeking training in this country. While TPP's may vary in their requirements, the idea is to discuss existing practices and suggest possible directions within the framework of the TESOL Guidelines (1975).

Background Information

The TPP program discussed here, like many others, includes four major components: linguistics, cultural studies, literature and methodology (together with practice teaching). While native English-speaking trainees are required to have a knowledge of at least one foreign language and culture, the Non-NETs must focus on American culture and demonstrate adequate English proficiency. Practice teaching, which is part of the two-term methods class, usually comes toward

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the end of the program so as to encourage the participants to apply insights gained through course work to their practice teaching.

The Methods Class

The Methods class provides ample opportunities for interaction between the two types of participants enhanced by the Non-NETs multi-cultural perspective. Thus, Chinese participants, for example, can explain the relationship between the teacher and the students in their culture and how that may be different from what is common in this culture. There is no doubt that the presence of the Non-NETs from various countries renders the interaction mutually beneficial to both types of participants culturally as well as linguistically.

The Special Needs of the Non-NETs

In spite of the benefits of interaction between the two types of participants, the Non-NETs have special needs that should be addressed. Following are some of the major areas of concern:

1. *Anxiety and Competition with Native Speakers*
   Anxiety may be felt by any beginning teacher, whether native or non-native. However, when put next to native speakers, the non-NETs often experience a strong sense of fear that they will not attain the same level of proficiency, and that the ESL students may reject them preferring a native speaker as a teacher.

2. *Cultural Understanding*
   The non-NETs are expected to have cultural understanding not only of the United States, but to some extent of the various cultures normally represented in the ESL class.

3. *Relevance of Required Course Work*
   While some required courses in linguistics and intercultural communication are valuable to all participants, some others, especially in cultural studies and literature, should be carefully considered to accommodate the needs of the non-NETs whose background and future employment are likely to be quite different from those of the native speakers.

4. *Reconciling New and Old Methodology*
   For the non-NETs, new teaching methods and techniques can be a challenge to accept as a learner, let alone adopt as a teacher. For example, the Arab or the Chinese trainees, who are used to authority and memorization, may have difficulty in adjusting to cognitive-code and discussion-based methods.

5. *Practice Teaching Opportunities*
   Opportunities for the non-NETs to participate in practice teaching, though an important part of their training to help them relate theory to practice, are not often adequately provided. If teaching assistantships are not avai-

able, and here competition with native speakers may be high, they are not often given the chance to be guided and eventually evaluated in their teaching.

Proposed Plan

To accommmodate the needs of the non-NETs, and at the same time address the issues involved, it is suggested that the training program be based, as much as possible, on a careful study of their educational backgrounds and possible future work. Involving the trainee in the planning (see Brumfit 1976) can be highly motivating.

1. As a first step, the level of proficiency in both spoken and written English must be evaluated on arrival and the language problems must be diagnosed. If necessary, further ESL training is recommended not only for language improvement, but for the experience of closely observing classroom teaching. At the same time, the trainee can start with a reduced load of non-ESL courses to allow time for cultural and academic adjustment.

2. In selecting the appropriate courses, the TESOL adviser may find it helpful to consult with the instrutors for the required courses to coordinate efforts and to accommodate the special needs of the non-NETs. It has been our experience that some instructors are willing and able to provide suggestions relevant to the non-NETs' needs in the assignments, the term paper projects and the reading lists.

   (a) Linguistics: In addition to the analysis of American English phonology and syntax, the non-NETs may be encouraged to do some contrastive analysis involving their native languages or dialects.

   (b) Literature: It is in this area that the NETs need careful guidance to help them select representative works to understand modern American literature (Marchwardt 1978).

   (c) Cultural Studies: While understanding American culture is important, insights from research in intercultural communication can be valuable, especially when related to the non-NETs' interaction with other participants from various cultures.

Adapting Methodology to the Cultural Context

There is evidence that cultural attitudes play a significant role in testing and instruction. Fukuda (1975), for example, in describing a four-year project for training Japanese teachers refers to the practice of *sakoku* (closed door policy) and the lack of confidence in spoken English. Rigid attitudes are not limited to non-Western cultures (see Richard Kalfus 1977 who reports on his experience teaching in a German *gymnasium*).

As the non-NETs are exposed to recent approaches and techniques, they

should be made aware of ways to adapt them to the cultural context. The discussion of cultural attitudes may be enhanced by a review of available information and videotapes. One revealing experience occurred in the TESOL Methods class when a videotape on English in American Samoa was shown. The majority of the participants expressed their disagreement and even resentment at the attitude of the teacher who was testing the students' oral proficiency. Only one Saudi participant showed enthusiasm for the teacher's approach and attitude. Providing the opportunity for reconciling the new methodology with cultural attitudes and systems outside the United States is beneficial, and indeed essential, to the two types of participants. Thus, it is not enough to demonstrate such approaches as the Silent Way, the Total Physical Response, Notional-Functional, the Natural Approach, etc. More important is to show how these approaches can be implemented or adapted in different cultural contexts. This may be facilitated by viewing videotapes that show teaching in other countries (see Clift 1976).

Providing Adequate Practice Teaching

Perhaps no area in the TPP is of more concern than that of providing adequate opportunities for the non-NETs to have guided practice teaching. According to the TESOL Guidelines, "The institution provides directed teaching practice with progressively increasing responsibility, under expert supervision in teaching situations appropriate to the student teacher's employment goals (1975:183)". This is certainly desirable and should be feasible when the training is in the home country. Realistically, however, there are limitations on providing those teaching situtations for the non-NETs who may be planning to teach in primary or secondary schools in their home countries. Part of the difficulty is due to the fact that many of the TPPs are housed in English or linguistics departments. (Less than one-third of the TPPs listed in the TESOL Directory (Blatchford 1982) are offered through Education). There is a limitation on the number of hours that can be assigned to methods and practice teaching. Parish, in discussing the constraints on the practicum for the M.A. students, has this to suggest: "Allow the non-native trainee opportunities to teach, in accordance with his ability and his wishes" (1976:329). The situation is further complicated by the fact that many, if not most, of the native participants, are not decided about their specific future employment and would like to take advantage of whatever jobs are available at the time of graduation.

In view of these limitations, it is perhaps advisable to expose the trainees gradually to a variety of areas and levels, and at the same time allow them to focus on one area of interest (elementary, college, etc.) so that the trainees can develop their teaching skills and broaden their perspective without being too limited in the field.

Practice Teaching as a Gradual Process

The model proposed assumes a close coordination between the ESL program and the TPP to facilitate the practice teaching process. At Portland State, where the model has undergone many changes for several years, the non-NETs take two terms of the TESOL Methods class (Greis 1984) in conjunction with

practice teaching usually after completing most of the required coursework, especially linguistics.

During the first term the practice activities are limited to tutoring and classroom observation. Tutoring, to be a valuable experience, must be carefully structured with these points in mind:

1. If possible, the tutor is matched with a tutee from the same cultural background. This can help reduce anxiety and enhance the practice experience. As one participant puts it: "... my tutee was a Japanese girl who shared my native language. I knew exactly her problems because I experienced (that) before. Tutoring worked well and both of us enjoyed meeting each other..."

2. In some cases, team work can ensure confidence and effectiveness especially when the non-NET works with a native speaker.

3. Tutoring can provide valuable insights when related to the classroom observation. The participant has a better understanding of the learners' strategies individually and as a member of a group. Furthermore, the teacher can provide the tutor with specific suggestions.

4. Tutoring enables the non-NET to learn first hand about diagnosis and the use of the textbook by the tutee inside and outside of class. Each tutoring session may focus on a specific problem area utilizing the textbooks but with attention to the learner's needs as illustrated by the sample of a report submitted at the end of the term. It will be noticed that the tutor attempts to integrate skills in light of the reading and the methods class discussion (see Appendix A).

Classroom Observation and Teaching

During the second term, the non-NET observes an ESL class systematically while working with an experienced teacher who gradually assigns teaching tasks to the trainee (teaching the passive, scanning, etc...). In time the trainee gets to know the students and is ready to teach the class, thus achieving a smooth transition from observing to teaching. The observation report provides a checklist of activities and skills for which to look. Since the instructor is expected to make comments on the report, there is a useful dialog with the instructor especially as the non-NET is often encouraged to discuss the lesson before and after the class. The procedure is for the non-NET to submit one report after observing the same class more than once in order to see the teaching act in context and not in isolation.

Practice Classes

The second term trainee has the option of teaching in the practice classes in addition to teaching and working with the experienced teacher who provides a report describing the work of the trainee. These practice classes have been designed to give the ESL students more practice and the trainee a chance to

try out new techniques or to gain more experience without much restriction. Practical suggestions are discussed in the methods class and in the readings (see Bailey and Celce-Murcia 1979).

Team Work

One idea that has proved successful in reducing anxiety is for the non-NET to cooperate with a native trainee in teaching one group. Just as in tutoring, team work emphasizes cooperation rather than competition. Judging by the limited experimentation so far, we have found that the activity is enjoyed by both the ESL students and the trainees.

Self Evaluation

While the process of evaluation starts with comments by teacher and peers, the videotape of one class marks the highlight of the experience. The non-NET presents the lesson plan to the methods class together with representative segments from the videotape. The other trainees make comments and suggestions which the non-NET reads and then once more reviews and videotape. In light of the feedback from peers and teachers, the trainee writes a self-evaluation. Our analysis of the trainees' comments reveals the value of the exercise; there are usually constructive suggestions enhanced by support from peers. Occasionally, the trainee tends to be on the defensive trying to justify the method used, but, by and large, the trainees show a genuine desire for self improvement. In their comments, the participants touch on methodological issues such as the treatment of errors and the approach used. The following excerpt illustrates the reaction of a Japanese trainee to the suggestions made first by the class instructor and later by the other trainees regarding the question of correcting students' errors:

> With regard to the suggestion to avoid correction during the students' responses, I was told to correct right after mistakes by (Ms. G. the instructor). Since it is hard for them to remember what they say if I wait too long, she felt it would be more helpful to correct immediately after they made a mistake. However, more practice would avoid their mistakes, I think. The timing of correction is so important and difficult that it depends upon the situation. In this case, I think correction did not inhibit the students' production. As suggested in comments, I need to project my voice more and be a little more assertive.

Conclusion

The special needs of the non-native ESOL trainees who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs in the United States are linguistic, cultural and academic. To accommodate these needs it is important that careful consideration be given to the selection of required course work, to the adaption of methodology and to the provision of adequate practice teaching. The proposed plan is for practice teaching to start with tutoring students from the same native language background. Systematic observation and gradual assumption of teaching responsibilities can

be guided by experienced teachers and facilitated by team work with the native ESOL trainees. Since the plan involves the coordination of ESL and the teacher preparation program, cooperation among the faculty is crucial. Further experimentation may suggest modifications based on the resources available to the institution. The plan, however, has proved to be helpful in accommodating the needs of non-NETs while providing more interaction and wider perspectives for the native participants.

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APPENDIX A

TESOL Methods Tutoring Report
Term: Fall
Tutor: Chinese speaker

Student and Level: Chinese speaker, Level 1
Number of times:
Plan and point of emphasis: pronuncitation, stress, intonation, etc.

Material Used: *Improving Spoken English*, by Joan Morley

Sessions: Date	Topics:	Comments:
10/13	1. pronunciation (previous coursework, sentences, dialogues	sound, /str/ /est/ /ʃ/–/ʃə/ we – /vi/

10/18	2.	pronunciation and rhythm. "Jazz chants" unstressed words	we - vi/ /est/ /r/
10/20	3.	Pronunciation & Rhythm + lab	Needs tape to follow
10/25	4.	Examine labwork. (stress, rhythm, sound, especially endings	/s/ /ʃ/ (3) stress + rhythm improved. ←adds /i/ afterward
10/27	5.	(record) error analysis, intonation, rhythm, past tense, word ending /t,d/	Assigned homework in ISE. Past tense ending (t,d) lesson 6, if has time lesson 6, too.
11/01	6.	Check homework. Past tense ending /+t/ /-d/ /ɑd/, blending	Improved. More on it next time.
11/03	7.	Review past tense endings. Start on pl. endings, blending in sentences, stress + rhythm	Occasionally leaves out words + morphemes. /s/ /ʃ/ initial s + endings
11/10	8.	Review past tense, pl. ending, blending stress, rhythm	Needs more exercises on stress and rhythm /v/ /w/ distinction.
11/12	9.	(½ hour lab + stress, rhythm in short sentences.	Needs more practice to learn how stress and rhythm help each other. Assigned passage in S-W.
11/17	10.	Stressed + weakened forms, passage reading.	/w/ /r/ /v/ /a/ ending C with /ə/ that is now there. Leaving out articles.
11/19	11.	Review, Stress, rhythm, word ending, weak forms, blending.	Assign passage with /w/ /r/ /v/ /n/ /ks/ + lesson 10, 11.
11/20	12.	On oral report + conversation (seeing the doctor, complaints etc.), attention to word endings + free communication.	Confidence + art of presentation.
12/01	13.	On oral report, word stem and	Reads word by word. No flow. /v/ /ð/ / /s/ /ʃ/.
12/04	14.	Oral report + free conversation (on work, food, etc.)	Word endings sometimes. Concentrates sentences, not single words. A few sounds /s/ /ʃ/ /θ/ /ð/
12/08	15.	Report. Free conversation (giving directions, descriptions, etc.)	Purposely avoids some sounds /ʃ/ /ð/ /e/.